



INL's new passenger buses such as the white bus shown here get 25% better mileage than their predecessors. Modernizing its 100-bus fleet and other strategic conservation measures have enabled INL to reduce its fuel consumption more than 20% in four years -- while increasing the use of biodiesel and E85 ethanol fuel.

INL cuts fuel use 20 percent, uses more biodiesel, E85 fuels

by [John Howze](#), INL Communications & Public Affairs

When it comes to fuel conservation and the drive for sustainability, Idaho National Laboratory is keen, green and lean. In the past four years, it has dramatically reduced its total fuel use while shifting increasingly toward more sustainable fuels such as B20 biodiesel and E85 (a blend of 85 percent bio-based ethanol and 15 percent gasoline).

Through June 2009, INL fuel use is down more than 167,000 gallons — an overall 20.2 percent fuel reduction for the first nine months of Fiscal Year 2009 — as compared to just four years ago.

"Five years ago, we inherited an aging vehicle fleet in great need of modernization," said INL Facilities & Site Services Director Dwayne Coburn. "[Battelle Energy Alliance](#) has put significant resources into sustainability by increasing the use of nonpetroleum fuel products, modernizing our fleet, improving our mass transit routes and reducing unnecessary vehicle use. Today you can see the result — and it is safe to say we will continue to show significant improvements in this area in the future."



INL is also modernizing its fleet of light-duty cars and pickup trucks.



View the [energy conservation interview](#) with INL's John Howze.

The savings soon runs into money — more than \$300,000 this year at current fuel prices, which have declined considerably since their peak last fall.

Increasing use of alternate fuels

INL has dramatically increased the use of alternate fuels. In April 2009, the INL bus fleet began running on B20 — a blend of 80 percent petroleum-based diesel with 20 percent bio-based fuel. Since then, the fleet has consumed more than 15,000 gallons of B20, creating a dramatic upward spike in INL's biofuel profile.

"E85 is now available at locations across the INL Site and at the INL Research Center in town," said INL fuel manager Tad Pearson. "Employees have been instructed to use E85 in every INL vehicle that is capable of using it. We continue to evaluate new fuel combinations that will increase

our use of sustainable biofuels versus petroleum fuels."

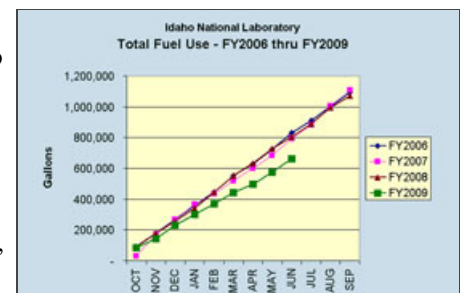
Fleet modernization

More than a quarter of the INL passenger bus fleet has been replaced with new fuel-efficient buses in the past four years. The average new bus carries more passengers and gets 25 percent better mileage than the older ones do. The upgrading of the 100-bus fleet is on schedule to be complete within four years.

INL is also modernizing its fleet of light-duty cars and pickup trucks. A contract with the General Services Administration signed last year provides a continuing flow of new, fuel-efficient vehicles to replace the worn-out ones, some as old as 20 years, that have been in service too long. The new vehicles operate on E85. Modernizing the fleet also cuts fleet maintenance costs — a separate savings amounting to thousands of dollars annually.

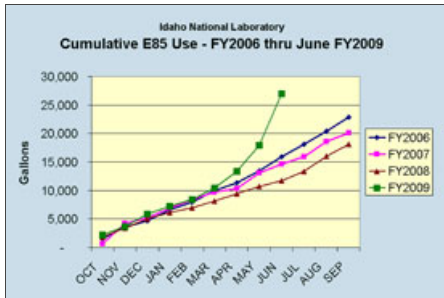
Mass transit improvements

Due to severe winter weather and the remoteness of many facilities on INL's 890-square-mile Site, INL bus routes have been streamlined this year — reducing the total number of routes while eliminating many of the old start-and-stop patterns that wove through residential neighborhoods of eastern Idaho's towns and cities. Centralization of passenger pickup locations continues and has



INL has reduced total fuel use by 167,000 gallons.

reduced vehicle miles, operating time and fuel use.



INL has increased its E85 use 150% since 2008.

Reducing unneeded vehicle use

INL bus drivers have also reduced unnecessary idling of vehicle engines. Now, bus engines are frequently turned off while buses wait at the Site to load passengers. With a fleet of approximately 100 buses, the savings can be more than 1,000 gallons of fuel per month. The use of INL light-duty vehicles has also declined as INL encourages employees to ride its shuttle buses and vans, which run on a regular schedule to remote INL facilities.

Fuel Efficiency Links

For more information about fuel efficiency, visit <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/> and the Department of Energy's [transportation energy efficiency](http://www.transportation.energyefficiency.gov/) site. You can also learn more about the topic by visiting these sites:

President Obama announces [national fuel efficiency policy](#).

Read more about [biodiesel](#).

What is [biodiesel](#)?

Read more about [E85](#).

[DOE Fuel Economy](#)

[EPA Fuel Economy](#)

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